

Barb Anness

2769 Braeburn • Rochester Hills, MI 48309
Phone: 248.375.2869 • E-Mail: tbanness@aol.com

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House Education Committee

Attn.: House Education Committee Chair, Representative Lisa Lyons

Michigan House of Representatives

Room 307

House Office Building

Lansing, MI

RE: HB 6004, HB 5923

Dear Representative Lyons and the Education Committee:

It is with concern that I am contacting this committee regarding the EAA, HB 6004 and HB 5923. I'm the parent of two students in the Rochester Community School district in Oakland County. I value and appreciate the public education that my children are currently receiving in the RCS district. My concern is that this legislation as written, while trying to reform and improve, will weaken the ability of public education to provide fair and equitable education for ALL children in Michigan.

My specific concerns are as follows:

- The EAA is a byproduct of PA 4, the Emergency Manager law **that voters just rescinded by voting no Proposal 1**. Why is the legislature ignoring the will of the voters of the state and acting with such haste by creating more takeovers of local government?
- Should the Governor have his own statewide school district? Isn't this an extreme expansion of Executive power?
- These bills do not deal with quality education services. When is the legislature going to make sure that we are creating quality choices for students? **AND demand the same transparency** (that public education is required to provide) **from Charter or cyber based schools?**
- Regarding HB 5923: if it passes, this new school district will be able to open school anywhere in the state, not just in districts with poor performing schools. Is it possible that these reforms will lead to corporate run schools where public tax dollars are sent to for-profit companies? **Would the profits from charter or cyber schools be equitably distributed throughout all schools in MI, as they were originally MI taxpayer dollars?**
- Selective enrollment, as proposed in HB 5923, will lead to greater segregation in our public schools and provide for *unequal access to quality programming*.
- If the specialized schools are quality ideas, then they should be available to *ALL* public schools and not just charter and for profit schools run by corporations. This is inequitable and gives an unfair advantage to corporate run schools.

This legislation allows for discrimination against students based on academic achievement which research has proven is directly linked to economics and poverty, further segregating our children! It also promotes

corporate schools for profit, using taxpayer money, while not holding these for profit schools to the same accountability as public schools. However, the biggest issue I have regarding this legislation is that it erodes the financial support for community public schools by spreading resources thinner and provides choice for choices sake, without regard to quality or accountability!

"Let us not seek the Republican answer nor the Democratic answer but the right answer."

– John F. Kennedy

Sincerely,

Barb Anness

Concerned parent of two great kids

Taxpayer

Vice President/West Middle School PTSA